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Hanafi urges Nangarhar officials to enhance public services

KABUL: Mawlavi Abdul Salam Hanafi, the Deputy Prime Minister of the Islamic Emirate for Administrative Affairs, met with Mawlavi Gul Mohammad, Governor of Nangarhar, urging the provincial officials to intensify efforts in delivering effective and quality services to the public, Arg said in a statement Monday.

Hanafi praised the province's ongoing activities, especially efforts to support returning refugees and ensure access to education, healthcare, and development programs, according to the statement.

He stressed the importance of addressing public demands and instructed local authorities to prioritize the well-being of residents through transparent and efficient governance.

Meanwhile, Governor Gul Mohammad presented a detailed report on the province's activities, highlighting the continuous efforts of local authorities in education, healthcare, and development programs.

The Kabul Times

Police personnel urged to wear official uniforms

KABUL: The country's Ministry of Interior said in a statement Monday that all military officials and personnel must wear military uniforms while carrying out their duties.

Ensuring security, upholding the law, and combating terrorism stand as fundamental responsibilities of the ministry, the statement said.

Therefore, the directive to wear uniforms aims to aid public identification of officials during their duties, the statement added.

The Kabul Times

Over 164,600 tons of goods transported through railway

KABUL: The Ministry of Public Works of the Islamic Emirate said in a statement Monday that a total of 164,671 metric tons of goods have been transported via the railways during the past two weeks of the current month of the solar year.

The goods were traded through the Hairatan, Aqina, Torghundi, and Khaf–Herat railways, the statement said.

The transported items included petroleum products, non-petroleum goods, and various commercial materials, both imported into and exported from the country, the statement said.

Out of the total volume, 2,960 metric tons were exports, mainly consisting of dried fruits and pomegranate juice, the statement added.

The Ministry reaffirmed its commitment to enhancing transport services and improving logistics infrastructure to support traders and boost economic growth.

The Kabul Times

Survey on Gulbahar dam completed

KABUL: The country's Ministry of Water and Energy said in a statement Monday that the observational survey and feasibility assessment have been completed on the Gulbahar dam on the Panjshir River. The Gulbahar Dam project is considered a significant future source of energy generation and a key component in water resource management in the country, the statement said, adding that if implemented, it is expected to play a pivotal role in mitigating water scarcity in Kapisa, Parwan, and parts of Kabul province.

In addition to boosting hydroelectric energy production, the dam would ensure a sustainable water supply for agriculture and drinking needs in the region, the statement added.

The Ministry of Water and Energy has pledged to work closely with technical experts, local authorities, and potential investors to move forward with detailed technical studies and secure funding for dam projects.

The Kabul Times

Shaheen meets Qatari official for religious cooperation

Both sides explored opportunities for Qatar's support within Afghanistan's religious and social development framework, the statement said.

DOHA: Mohammad Suhail Shaheen, Ambassador of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan to Doha, met with Ghanem bin Shaheen Al Ghanem, Minister of Endowments and Islamic Affairs of the State of Qatar, discussing bilateral religious cooperation, the embassy said in a statement Monday.

Both sides explored opportunities for Qatar's support within Afghanistan's religious and social development framework, the statement said.

Minister Ghanem pledged Qatar's readiness to cooperate on the matters discussed, signaling potential future collaboration in areas aligned with Afghanistan's needs.

The Kabul Times

Books written based on Islamic and Afghan values, allowed to be published

KABUL: The regular meeting of the Book Evaluation Commission was held with the Deputy Minister of Information and Culture for the Publications Affairs, Mawlavi Muhajer Farahi, on the chair, deciding to allow the publication of those books that have been written according to the Islamic and Afghan values, the ministry said in a statement Monday.

At the beginning, the commission's secretary shared a report regarding the previous commission's meeting with the participants, the statement said

Also, a number of books that have been presented to the commission for assessment were distributed to the commission's members, and they were instructed to evaluate and share their findings in the next meeting, the statement said.

The Book Evaluation Commission is held weekly to assess different books and grant publication approval to those books that have been written under Islamic and Afghan values, as well as the policies of the Islamic Emirate.

The Kabul Times

Kabul Municipality begins work on recreational park in Ahmad Shah Baba Mina

Kabul: The Kabul Municipality said in a statement Monday that it has initiated the construction of a new recreational park in the first block of the Ahmad Shah Baba Mina housing project, located in the city's 12th district.

As part of the KM's efforts to expand green spaces across the capital, the project is being implemented in cooperation with the UN project office, the statement said.

The park will be constructed on 5,740 square meters within three months, the statement added.

Construction activities will include building a boundary wall, paving walkways, digging a water well, creating an irrigation reservoir, planting grass, trees and flowers, and installing waste bins to improve environmental cleanliness and provide a pleasant recreational space for residents.

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Food for thought

Today's generation guarantees our bright future

Ashura strengthens brotherhood among Islamic Ummah

Ashura is a day of commemoration in Islam as it occurs annually on the tenth of Muharram, the first month of the Islamic calendar.

Ashura is highly admired and paid respect by Sunni and Shia Muslims worldwide.

According to history, for Sunni Muslims, Ashura marks the parting of the Red Sea by Moses and the salvation of the Israelites. Also, on this day, it is believed that Noah disembarked from the Ark, God forgave Adam, and Yousuf was released from prison, among various other auspicious events having occurred on Ashura according to Sunni tradition. As said, Ashura is celebrated in Sunni Islam through supererogatory fasting and other acceptable expressions of joy. In some Sunni communities, the annual Ashura festivities include carnivals, bonfires, and special dishes, even though some Sunni scholars have criticized such practices.

But for Shia Muslims, Ashura is a day of mourning as they annually commemorate the death of Imam Husain ibn Ali, grandson of the Islamic prophet Muhammad (pbuh) and the third Imam of Shia Muslims. Imam Husain refused on moral grounds to pledge his allegiance to the Umayyad caliph Yazid ibn Muawiya and was subsequently martyred, alongside most of his male relatives and his small retinue, by the Umayyad army in the Battle of Karbala on Ashura. Among the Shia, mourning for Imam Husain is viewed as an act of protest against oppression, a struggle for Allah the Almighty and a means of securing the intercession of Husain in the afterlife. Ashura is observed through mourning gatherings and processions. In such ceremonies, Shia mourners strike their chests to share in the pain of Imam Husain. Sometimes extreme self-flagellation, often involving self-inflicted bloodshed, remains controversial among the Shia Scholars and often condemned by many Shia clerics and outlawed in some Shia communities.

Anyway, in Afghanistan, both Sunni and Shia Muslims pay high respect to the work, struggle and devotion of Imam Husayn, who lost his life along with more than 70 of his companions in the battle of Karbala against Yazid and his forces to ensure justice and freedom among the Islamic Ummah.

Shia and Sunni Muslims are now living under a single umbrella provided by the Islamic Emirate, as this year's Ashura was marked peacefully nationwide.

The Chinese modernization in my eyes

Part X

From Kabul to Beijing: An Afghan journalist's reflections on China's path to modernization

As I stand at the close of the China International Press Communication Center (CIPCC) 2025 program, I find myself deeply moved by the journey we've completed.

Over the course of four intensive months, I joined more than 100 journalists from over 100 countries in what became a shared experience of discovery, learning, and sincere cultural exchange.

What began as a professional media fellowship has evolved into a powerful reflection on what modernization means in the 21st century — and what it could mean for countries like mine, Afghanistan.

We traveled through various provinces, autonomous regions, and municipalities in China.

From the high-tech metro lines of Beijing to the breathtaking grasslands of Inner Mongolia, from the state-of-the-art logistics of e-commerce platforms to traditional cultural sites protected and revitalized — every stop on our journey told a story of balance. Balance between past and future, innovation and identity, growth and sustainability.

One of the most striking experiences for me was China's mastery in merging digital innovation with everyday life.

Apps like Taobao and Meituan have turned routine errands into seamless digital transactions. People order daily necessities online and receive them within hours — and if the item isn't suitable, it can be returned without friction.

For an Afghan journalist like myself, this level of digital infrastructure represents a glimpse into a future that Afghanistan, too, can aspire to — if provided with the right conditions, investment, and planning.

But modernization is not just about shiny buildings or fast internet. It is about mindset, governance, values, and most importantly — people. During this program, I was especially impressed by the hospitality, humility, and cultural pride of the Chinese people.

Whether at high-level meetings or casual local encounters, I never once felt like a foreigner. We were welcomed not as observers, but as friends. This openness reflects China's vision for building a "community with a shared future for mankind" — a message echoed time and again in the speeches of Chinese officials.

At the closing ceremony held in the Diaoyutai State Guest House, President of the China Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), Mr. Wu Hailong, acknowledged the journalists' role in bridging China with the wider world. His speech wasn't just ceremonial — it was deeply reflective.

He recalled our shared visit to Inner Mongolia, where we witnessed China's innovative, eco-friendly agriculture firsthand.

A moment that especially stood out was when we were offered a new type of pesticide so safe it could be mixed with water and drunk like syrup — an almost surreal, humorous moment that later trended on Chinese social media.

Assistant Minister of Foreign Affairs, Mr. Hong Lei, also delivered powerful remarks. He emphasized China's commitment to the Global South, calling on all nations to move forward together rather than backward in isolation.

He cited President Xi Jinping's philosophy of building global partnerships through peace, multilateralism, and mutual respect.

These aren't just slogans; they are part of China's consistent diplomatic messaging and, as we witnessed throughout our visits, are also reflected in action — from Belt and Road infrastructure to inclusive development models.

For Afghanistan, this experience has opened new horizons.

Our country stands at a critical crossroads — in need of economic rebuilding, digital transformation, and regional cooperation. China's path of modernization offers both lessons and possibilities.

Programs like CIPCC, and frameworks like the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), can help Afghanistan reconnect with regional and global development conversations.

By actively participating in such platforms, Afghanistan can tell its story, attract investment, and build partnerships rooted in mutual respect and shared opportunity.

This trip has also reminded me that progress doesn't require abandoning identity. China's modernization has not erased its history; it has embraced it. Museums, temples, traditional arts, and Confucian values coexist with AI, 5G, and green technologies. For a country like Afghanistan, which has a rich yet fragile cultural heritage, this approach offers a roadmap — to preserve the soul of our civilization while stepping confidently into the modern era.

Moreover, the lectures we attended by Chinese scholars — on topics ranging from media and governance to social management and foreign policy — highlighted another crucial dimension of modernization: thought leadership.

China is not just investing in infrastructure, but also in ideas, narratives, and soft power.

For Afghan journalists, thinkers, and policymakers, engaging with these discourses can provide valuable insights on how to lead reform with authenticity and coherence.

In closing, I want to extend my deepest gratitude to the Chinese Public Diplomacy Association (CPDA), the hosts in each province we visited, the interpreters and coordinators who supported us, and most of all, the people of China — for opening their doors and hearts.

I am also thankful to my fellow journalists, whose perspectives from Latin America, Africa, the Middle East, Europe, and Asia enriched every conversation and gave this journey a global spirit.

As we return to our home countries, we do not just take back memories or photos — we carry forward a deeper understanding of China's unique path, its challenges, its innovations, and its vision. For me, this is not the end, but the beginning of a lasting engagement.

I hope to see more Afghan journalists, researchers, students, and entrepreneurs take part in such programs.

The world needs more dialogue, more bridges — not walls. Indeed, this experience was not just a look into China's modernization — it was a mirror reflecting what is possible for Afghanistan and the broader Global South.

And if we walk this path together, with mutual respect and sustained cooperation, the future will not just be modern — it will be shared.

The End.

Nik Mohammad Nikmal

Hamas-Israel ceasefire deal expected soon, reports

Some countries, including the U.S. are mediating ceasefire between Hamas resistance forces and the Zionist regime with the truth is expected to take effect as soon as this week

The U.S. President Donald Trump has said that there is a possibility Hamas and Israel may reach an agreement on a ceasefire and prisoner exchange this week.

While talks between Hamas and the regime, mediated by the United States, Egypt, and Qatar, are ongoing, residents of Gaza say their lives are increasingly consumed by fear, insecurity, and destruction.

Israeli airstrikes have not only continued but intensified in many areas.

Media quoted Hassan Al-Samri, who shared his eyewitness as saying: "These are horrifying scenes. Children were torn to pieces for no reason. We were displaced people who followed the instructions, believing the shelters were safe, and sought refuge there. Now, the shelters are being targeted again and again."

Akram Salmi, eyewitness: "I don't feel safe. Every day, I say, 'Our end is near. We will die one by one. It's only a matter of time.' This is how we think now."

U.S. President Donald Trump said there is a strong chance that Hamas and Israel could reach an agreement this week regarding a ceasefire and the release of prisoners.

Trump stated:"I think there's a good chance we have a deal with Hamas during the week, during the coming week, pertaining to quite a few of the hostages. You know, we've gotten a lot of the hostages out. But pertaining to the remaining hostages, quite a few of them will be coming out. We think we'll have that done this week."

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu also told reporters, before his departure to Washington, that upcoming talks with the U.S. President could speed up the process of securing a ceasefire and the release of prisoners.

However, Palestinian sources, including a Hamas member, have said concerns remain regarding the delivery of humanitarian aid, the reopening of the Rafah crossing, and a precise timeline for the withdrawal of Israeli forces from Gaza.

Previously, Trump said it would probably be known in 24 hours whether Hamas has agreed to what he has called a "final proposal" for an Israel-Hamas ceasefire in Gaza.

The president also said he had spoken to Saudi Arabia about expanding the Abraham Accords, the deal on normalization of ties that his administration negotiated between Israel and some Gulf countries during his first term.

Trump said on Tuesday that Israel had accepted the conditions needed to finalise a 60-day ceasefire with Hamas, during which the parties will work to end the war.

He was asked on Friday if Hamas had agreed to the latest ceasefire deal framework and said: "We'll see what happens, we are going to know over the next 24 hours."

A source close to Hamas said on Thursday that the Movement sought guarantees that the new U.S.-backed ceasefire proposal would lead to the end of Israel's war in Gaza.

Two Israeli officials said those details were still being worked out. Dozens of Palestinians were killed on Thursday in Israeli strikes, according to Gaza authorities.

Tens of Palestinians were killed and hundreds wounded in the continued airstrikes by the Zionist regime in the devastated Gaza Strip, particularly in the neighborhood Khan Younus, mostly women and children while rushing to the aid distribution sites in the inclave. **Inam Hashemi**

Telecom coverage expands in Zabul

Afghanistan, long plagued by years of war, political instability, and limited infrastructure, has lagged behind much of the world in many areas of development.

However, now that relative security has been established and new administrations are working towards national reconstruction, significant achievements are being observed in various sectors, including telecommunications.

The expansion of telecommunications has not only made communication among people easier but has also opened doors to education, commerce, healthcare, access to information, and government services.

Zabul province, one of the remote and southern provinces of Afghanistan, had for years many areas without access to telecommunication services. But now, signs of public satisfaction are visible, as new network towers have been installed in many districts and villages of the province, significantly increasing coverage.

Residents of Zabul say that for years they had demanded relief from the hardships of climbing mountains and traveling long distances just to connect with their relatives.

Bismillah, a resident of Shahr-e-Safa district in this province, says that telecommunication services have been activated in their area over the past year, freeing them from many of the previous difficulties.

He says, "In the past, we used to climb mountain tops for hours just to get a signal, but now we can make calls from our homes. This is a major change for us, and we greatly appreciate the government's efforts in this regard."

Other residents from various remote parts of the province also expressed happiness about the growing reach of telecommunication networks, stating that services have improved across Zabul since the Islamic Emirate came to power.

Saifullah, a resident of Shinkay district, says that for decades there were no functioning networks in his village. But he adds that in recent years, two telecommunication networks have become active in their village, allowing them to make phone calls and use internet services from their homes.

He adds, "For many years, we used to climb the hills behind the village just to get a signal, but now we have two functioning networks in our village. We can now make phone calls and access the internet from inside our homes. This is a major transformation for us."

In addition to the districts, telecommunication voice and internet services have also improved significantly in Qalat, the provincial capital, alleviating many issues for the residents.

Farid Ahmad, a resident of the remote "Manda" area in Qalat, says that where they used to climb hills just to make a single phone call, networks now function fully in their area.

He says, "Previously, for just one call, we had to climb the mountains behind the village. Now, the networks are fully operational in our area. We use both the phone and internet—from inside our homes. It was once a dream that has now become reality."

Provincial officials in Zabul say that telecommunication networks are now active in nearly all districts of the province.

Mawlavi Abdul Hadi Yahya, the provincial head of Telecommunications and Information Technology, says that in the past three months alone, 11 new sites from various telecommunication companies have been activated.

He adds that 27 more network towers are being installed in different areas of the province. Once operational, these will provide telecommunication services to parts of Zabul that are still deprived.

He says, "Only this year, since the beginning of Hamal (March-April) 1404, 11 network sites have been activated in different parts of Zabul by various telecommunication companies. Work is currently underway on 27 additional sites, and we hope that by the end of this year, those will be active as well, covering the remaining areas of Zabul with telecommunication services."

This comes while some other parts of the country still lack network coverage, and residents of various remote areas continue to call on the government to activate telecommunication services in their regions.

Ehsanullah Wolasmal

The negative impacts of social media on one's moral and personality

Part I

Social media, which was initially created to facilitate communication, content sharing, and interaction among users, has today changed to an important part of human's thought, mind, and personality.

Despite its many positive aspects, this communication tool has played a significant role in the decline of moral values. In this article, we have analyzed the effects of social media on the moral structure of humans from historical, legal, intellectual, social, and psychological perspectives, social media, we see that it is a kind of virtual society where one has all the freedom even from his natural boundaries. Irresponsible speech, the spread of lies, indecent images, and unverified contents can be freely disseminated through social media platforms, which is all against the values that human nature.

Social media has created such a mental environment in which users sacrifice their personality in the pursuit of fame, getting followers, and likes. This situation fosters the idea of "Riya" (showing off), which and it is clear to us how these new phenomena have paved the way for changing or weakening moral standards.

If we look at the history of moral values, humans have tried to distinguish between good and evil, truth and lies, modesty and immodesty, justice and injustice, and other values since the beginning of social life.

Religions, cultures, and civilizations have developed principles, laws, and humanistic education to protect these values.

Islam, which has a comprehensive response to the innate needs of humanity, has provided fundamental teachings on moral values.

The Holy Quran and the Hadiths of the Prophet (peace be upon him) emphasize the protection of honesty, modesty, patience, trustworthiness, good character, and many other values.

For example, the Prophet (peace be upon him) said: "I have only been sent to perfect the noblest morals" (I have been sent to perfect the highest standards of morals).

When we look deeply into the Holy Quran strongly condemns.

From a Sharia perspective, although access to social media is permissible in principle, meaning that it is neither forbidden nor obligatory in nature, this permissibility is conditional, and the way in which it is used causes a change in the ruling.

This is a jurisprudential rule, meaning that it refers to one's intension.

So, if a permissible tool is used for a forbidden purpose, it also assumes the ruling of being forbidden in Sharia.

Today, the use of various platforms of social media, such as Facebook, Instagram, TikTok, YouTube, and others may be permissible for communicating with relatives, friends, and academic circles; however, the dominant form of use and historical trajectory show that most people use these platforms for a purpose that either conflicts with the principles of Sharia, or leads to moral decline, or is a gateway to contemporary sedition.

In social media, backbiting has changed to a common business among users.

Our Prophet (peace be upon him) has a definition for backbiting: "Backbiting implies your talking about your brother in a manner which he does not like.

It was said to him." In social media, people's privacy, mistakes, weaknesses, and defects become common business among users, which not only falls into the category of backbiting, but often takes the form of slander, which is false accusation, and this is considered a major crime in the Quran: "And those who harm believing men and believing

women for [something] other than what they have earned have certainly born upon themselves a slander and manifest sin". (Al-Ahzab – 58)

Among other poisonous manifestations of social media is defamation, meaning that when one spreads false information, and obscenity, both of which are against Islamic morals and Sharia principles.

Allah Almighty says: "Indeed, those who like that immorality should be spread [or publicized] among those who have believed will have a painful punishment in this world and the Hereafter. And Allah knows and you do not know". (Al-Noor – 19)

This verse clearly warns those who want to spread immoral contents publicly in the Muslim community through various social media platforms. This is what happening today in social media.

Those called themselves as experts in the social media or "content creators" and "influencers" attract people's attention with their beautiful appearance, half-naked clothes, lust, and indecency.

Mohammad Qasim Azzam

35 development projects to be launched in Kunar

KABUL: The Ministry of Borders and Tribal Affairs said in a statement the other day that 35 development projects worth 131 million Afghanis will be implemented in six border districts of Kunar province.

During the inauguration ceremony, Mawlavi Mohammad Ismail Ghaznawi, Deputy Minister of MoBTA, stated that the projects initiated under a special directive of the IEA Supreme Leader will be completed using domestic funding to ease living conditions for residents in Khas Kunar, Sarkano, Manogai, Shultan, Dangam, and Nari districts, according to the statement.

The projects include the construction of schools, roads, water supply networks, and healthcare centers, among others, the statement said.

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Refereeing seminar for volleyball wraps up in northern Afghanistan

A three-day volleyball refereeing seminar, organized by the North Zone Volleyball Directorate in collaboration with the Balkh Provincial Department of Physical Education and Sports, successfully concluded in Balkh province. The seminar brought together 20 volleyball referees from the provinces of Balkh, Sar-e-Pul, and Jawzjan.

The participants, all active referees in their regions, received comprehensive training on key aspects of officiating volleyball matches. The seminar covered important topics such as the rules of the game, the principles of refereeing, and understanding essential volleyball concepts. These sessions aimed to enhance the knowledge and practical skills of the referees, ensuring they are well-equipped to officiate matches according to international standards.

Organizers stated that the primary goal of the seminar was to raise the professional capacity of volleyball referees in northern Afghanistan. By familiarizing referees with modern and standardized officiating techniques, the program hopes to contribute to the development and credibility of volleyball competitions in the region.

At the conclusion of the seminar, all participating referees were awarded official certificates, acknowledging their successful completion of the training. These certificates are expected to help them advance their roles within the national volleyball structure and participate in higher-level competitions. This initiative marks an important step in strengthening the technical aspects of volleyball in Afghanistan's northern provinces. By investing in the education and development of referees, sports authorities aim to foster a more professional and competitive environment for athletes and officials alike.

The Kabul Times

Afghan pacer Naveen-ul-Haq sidelined for six weeks due to injury

Afghanistan's national T20 fast bowler, Naveen-ul-Haq, has been ruled out of action for six weeks following a recent injury to his shoulder and left calf. The setback was confirmed after Naveen experienced pain during a match, prompting him to seek medical attention.

According to medical reports, Naveen initially complained of discomfort in his left calf, accompanied by pain in his shoulder. After undergoing MRI scans, doctors found that while the calf issue was minor, his bowling shoulder had sustained significant stress. The scans revealed a ligament tear, believed to be the result of repeated strain during matches.

Following the diagnosis, doctors have recommended complete rest for six weeks. He has been strictly advised to avoid any physical strain, including lifting heavy weights and participating in any cricketing activity, to allow the injury to heal fully.

For specialized treatment, Naveen is currently receiving medical care at a hospital in England. Notably, he is under the supervision of the same medical team that treated him previously, ensuring continuity in his recovery process.

This injury is a setback for the Afghan cricket team, as Naveen-ul-Haq remains one of the team's key pace options in the shorter formats of the game. His absence will be felt in the upcoming fixtures, but the focus remains on his full recovery. **The Kabul Times**

One-day Kung Fu tournament held in Faryab

A one-day Kung Fu competition was successfully held in the Gurziwan district of Faryab province, featuring 70 athletes from various parts of the region.

The event was organized by the provincial representative office of the Faryab Kung Fu Federation.

Participants competed in three different age categories: teenagers, youth, and adults. Throughout the day, the athletes showcased their skills in various Kung Fu techniques, demonstrating not only physical strength and agility but also discipline and commitment to the sport.

The competition aimed to promote martial arts in the region and provide a platform for talented athletes to gain experience and recognition. It also served as an opportunity to identify promising individuals who may represent the province in future national-level events.

At the conclusion of the event, the athletes from Faryab's provincial center emerged victorious, securing first place with a total of 10 points. The team from Gurziwan district claimed second place with 8 points, while the athletes from Balcheragh district earned third place with 6 points.

Organizers praised the spirit of sportsmanship among the participants and emphasized the importance of such events in nurturing local talent.

They expressed hope that continued support for martial arts would contribute to youth engagement and personal development across Faryab province. The event concluded with the distribution of awards and certificates to the top-performing athletes, celebrating their dedication and encouraging them to continue pursuing excellence in martial arts. **The Kabul Times**

Bangladeshi company pledges investment in solar power projects in country

KABUL: Mohammad Ishaq Abul Khair, the head of a Bangladeshi company, in a meeting with Mawlavi Rahmat Wali Rahmani, the head of the Investment Attraction Department of the Ministry of Water and Energy, expressed readiness to invest in solar power generation projects ranging from 100 to 1000 megawatts in Afghanistan, the ministry said in a statement the other day.

Abul Khair, the head of B. P. T. company, emphasized his firm interest in contributing to solar power projects of 100 to 1000 megawatts in Afghanistan and sought the Afghan government's support in this endeavor. Mawlavi Rahmani assured the foreign investor of the ministry's assistance, highlighting the conducive investment environment in Afghanistan, which is progressively improving.

The Kabul Times

UK experts inspect fighter jet stuck in India for three weeks

A 14-member team of engineers from the UK has begun assessing a state-of-the-art British fighter jet stuck at an airport in India for more than three weeks now.

The F-35B landed on 14 June at Thiruvananthapuram airport in the southern state of Kerala where it was diverted after it ran into bad weather during a sortie in the Indian ocean.

The plane then reported a technical snag and was unable to return to the HMS Prince of Wales, the Royal Navy's flagship carrier.

Its prolonged presence on Indian soil has sparked curiosity and raised questions about how such a modern aircraft could remain stranded in a foreign country for so long.

Since the jet's landing, engineers from HMS Prince of Wales had assessed the aircraft, but they were unable to fix it.

On Sunday, the British High Commission said in a statement that a team of engineers from UK was "deployed to Thiruvananthapuram airport to assess and repair the F-35B aircraft".

It said the team was "carrying specialist equipment necessary for the movement and repair process".

Video footage shared by Indian news agencies ANI and PTI showed a British Royal Air Force Airbus landing at Thiruvananthapuram to drop the team of technical experts.

Videos showed the F-35B being towed away to a hangar - the high commission had earlier said they had "accepted the offer to move the craft to the Maintenance Repair and Overhaul (MRO) facility", but were waiting for equipment to arrive from the UK.

F-35Bs are highly advanced stealth jets, built by Lockheed Martin, and are prized for their short take-off and vertical landing capability.

The $110m (£80m) jet is being guarded around the clock by six officers from the RAF.

The case of the stranded jet has also been raised in the House of Commons.

In India, images of the "lonely F-35B", parked on the tarmac and soaked by the Kerala monsoon rains, have made it a subject jokes and memes with many suggesting that it does not want to leave the scenic state of Kerala, described as "God's own country" in tourism brochures.

Experts say if the team of engineers is unable to repair the aircraft and make it fly worthy, it will have to be dismantled and carried out in a bigger cargo plane such as a C-17 Globemaster transport aircraft. BBC

Death toll from Texas floods rises to 82, dozens still missing

The death toll from the catastrophic floods that hit the state of Texas in the United States has risen to 82, as the search for the missing continues and officials face questions over a failure to evacuate people in hard-hit Kerr County.

Texas Governor Greg Abbott said on Sunday that at least 41 people remain unaccounted for across the southern state, three days after the deluge, and that more could be missing.

He promised authorities will continue to work around the clock to find the missing, and warned that additional rounds of heavy rains lasting into Tuesday could produce more life-threatening flooding.

In Kerr County, Sheriff Larry Leitha said on Sunday that searchers have found the bodies of 68 people, including 28 children, many of whom went missing from Camp Mystic, a Christian summer camp for girls.

Leitha said 10 more girls and a counsellor remain missing and pledged to keep searching until "everybody is found".

President Donald Trump sent his condolences to the victims and said he would probably visit the area on Friday. His administration had been in touch with Abbott, he added.

"It's a horrible thing that took place, absolutely horrible. So we say, 'God bless all of the people that have gone through so much, and God bless… God bless the state of Texas'," he told reporters as he left New Jersey.

Texas Division of Emergency Management Chief Nim Kidd said the destruction killed three people in Burnet County, one in Tom Green County, five in Travis County and one in Williamson County.

Kidd said rescuers were evacuating people from more places along the river, "because we are worried about another wall of river coming down in those areas", with rain continuing to fall on soil in the region already saturated from Friday's rains.

Questions over preparedness

The Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) was activated on Sunday and is deploying resources to first responders in Texas after Trump issued a major disaster declaration, the Department of Homeland Security said.

US coastguard helicopters and planes were aiding search and rescue efforts.

Freeman Martin, the director of the Texas Department of Public Safety, said on Sunday that he expected to "see the death toll rise today and tomorrow".

Authorities, meanwhile, have faced growing questions about whether enough warnings were issued in an area long vulnerable to flooding, and whether enough preparations were made.

Al Jazeera's Shihab Rattansi, reporting from central Texas, said several communities along the Guadalupe River were evacuated after the National Weather Service sent out repeated warnings about the rising water levels, but not those in Kerr County.

"There are still no answers as to why those here weren't alerted," he said.

Aljazeera